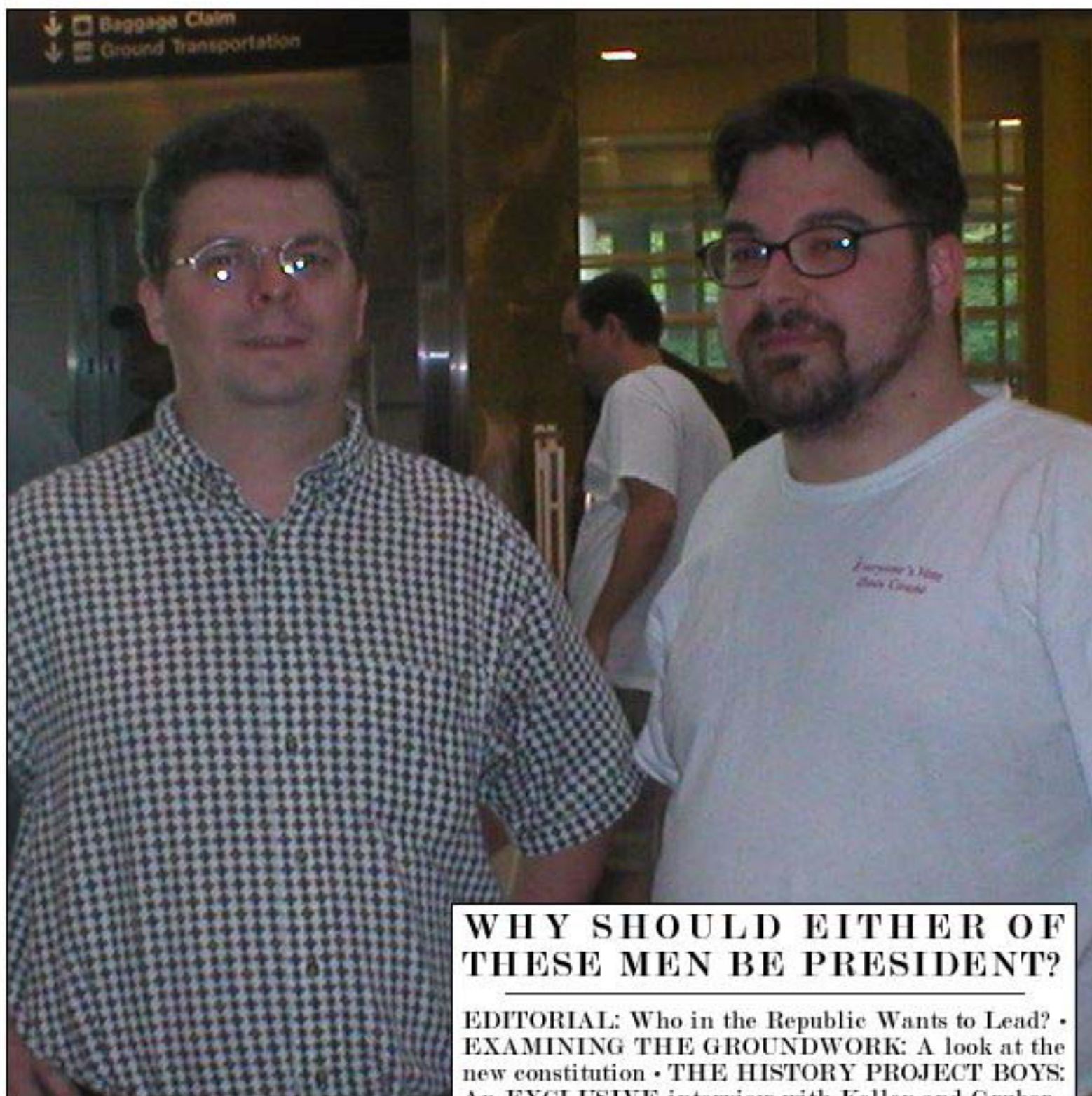


TALOSSA'S PREMIER NEWS-MAGAZINE

QATORITRINS



WHY SHOULD EITHER OF THESE MEN BE PRESIDENT?

EDITORIAL: Who in the Republic Wants to Lead? • EXAMINING THE GROUNDWORK: A look at the new constitution • THE HISTORY PROJECT BOYS: An EXCLUSIVE interview with Kelley and Gruber • ALSO: New Editorial Cartoonist!

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Wanting to lead

Is multiparty democracy in danger in the Talossan Republic? This question may seem strange. Are we not days away from endorsing a super-democratic constitution, built on the lessons of the tyranny we all suffered before the Revolution? Don't we have a thriving, partisan culture, with three political parties already advertising and perhaps more to come?

Let's remember why the Kingdom was **not** democratic. I was personally attracted by its promises of "free-wheeling multiparty democracy". And certainly, several parties contested elections. Of course, the same could be said of the old East Germany, and even today of near-fascist countries such as Zimbabwe or Singapore.

What opposition parties there were often weren't oppositionists at all – they supported the King and his government, and were mainly propped up to keep an appearance of democracy. If a real opposition party looked like gaining any real support, the King would make life unpleasant for everyone until his opponents quit the country out of boredom and disgust.

So it's not enough to simply have different parties running in elections. *We must have alternative leaderships* if elections are to mean anything. If, no matter who gets the votes, much the same people are going to be running things – or, different people might be running things, but according to the same principles – then you could be excused for being politically apathetic. Look at American presidential elections.

We don't have a real multi-party democracy in the Republic yet, for two reasons. One, there's no real ideological debates on Talossan issues. Certainly the Guelphs and the PSD can argue over "real-world" politics until the day Ben apologises – and the Peculiarists will be there to tell us not to take things too seriously. But there's no *Talossan issues*. Everyone agrees that we should have limited contact with serious micronations. Everyone seems to like the idea of secret-ballot referendums on new citizens. No-one is proposing major amendments to the Constitution.

Right now, Talossan elections look like being all about minor issues of personality – whether Pope or Cavéir gets to wear the ceremonial hat (or whatever the President wears). This is democracy – but it's not multiparty democracy. It's more like the factions within a single party. That's understandable, in the early days of the Republic when we are still finding our feet as a nation.

Secondly, and worse, even this "multi-personality democracy" is threatened by the fact that there's not even a great choice of personalities. Look at that "table of intentions" which cxhn. Furxhéir keeps publishing in *Seifetziueascâ*. There are very few people who feel they have the time or energy to take on leading roles in the Republic. Understandably – many of us have highly interesting real lives.

But we need citizens who want to lead the Republic, if our elections are to be anything but boring "musical chairs" exercises. And if more citizens don't feel they have the time or energy to lead, we have to ask what we can do to change that. Possible questions could be – how much work does a leader of the Republic have to do? And is our political culture something in which the average citizen feels comfortable getting involved? ■



Miestrâ Schivâ
*"The Republic's Most
 Articulate Spokeswhatever"*

tivicinats përmîntençar 'n aparainçû dal democraçû. Schi 'n contrapharti vrâts sembleva gagñar del supôrt vrâts, el Regeu faceva malpruvadâ la vidâ përdtoct txuscâ sieu contréirs cebevent la nazium à c'hauça dal enuxhitâ és ôdiôsità.

Aghôrc non sufiça simplamînt tirê dels partis underschidlêc'hs qî cuntestent dals eleziuns. *Noi fossent tirê dels duceât xen alternatiûs*, përqê las eleziuns tischent inen proposizun. Schi, qievri gagñarhent las votaziuns, els misméux xhînts predicarhent – eda, xhînts underschidlêc'hs pût-estâre predicarhent, mäs përd els mismâs principâis – aghôrc si pût estarê escusat përd estarê politicâlmînt apatgétic. Videtz las eleziuns përd el presedînt dels Estats Viênsicats.

Non ja dêtxâ 'n democraçû pluralistâ vrâts din el Repûblicâ, përd douâ cauças. Pirméis, non ja dals ráisnâs ideoloxháis vrâtsilor ôvêr las iðûns Talossâes. Përd certân, els Guelphen és els Pésédistâns pût ráisnar ôvêr els politici dal "mundeu vrâts" txuscâ la ziuâ quând Ben apoloxhara – és els Peculiaristâns se trovarhent përd zirarê à nhoi non se tro preocupar.

Mäs non ja dals iðûns Talossâes. Toct agreant qê noi fossent tirê del contâcts limitesçû cûn dals naziumetâs seriösen. Toct semblent amar la idéâ dels referendûms scrutins-secrêts ôvêr citaxhiêns nouveux. Neviens propoça dels amendamâintschen grûlts àl Constituziun.

Strax, las eleziuns Talossâes semblent êstarê ôvêr dals iðûns pic'hotschen dal pèrsonalitâ – siat Pope eda Cavéir deserva apoartar el capéu maravêtxâl (eda qêtevri apoartarha el Prûm Citaxhiên). C'è la democraçû – mäs non c'è la democraçû pluralistâ. C'è cumprencavâl, dîn las ziuâs frûs dal Repûblicâ, quând noi adûc trovent ár peds come 'n nazium.

Douâlaiset, és piôr, mismâ aceasta "democraçû plûrs-individuâl" isch tgreatenzadâ përd el fâts qê non ja mismâ 'n çoiçéu grûlt dels individuâis. Risguardetz acest "tableu dals intenziuns" qêt pública cxhn. Furxhéir dîn *Seifetziueascâ*. Ja tréi pocs dels xhînts qî sentient qê os tiennet el tîmp eda el ênerxhi përd prîndar dals prûmâs roslâs dîn la Repûblicâ. Cumprencavâlmînt – plûrs da nhoi tiennent dals vidâs vrâtsilor tréi întzereçînds.

Mäs noi fossent tirê dels citaxhiêns qî volent dûciar la Repûblicâ, përd qê ár eleziuns non serent exerciçeux enuxhînds da "cadéirâs musicâis". És schi pû dels citaxhiêns non sentient qê tiennent el tîmp eda el ênerxhi dûciar, noi fossent zemandar qêt noi possent façarê cambiar acest. Dals queziuns poûcivâis – çâoben del travâl fost façarê 'n dûceu dal Repûblicâ? És ár culturâ politicâl, ç'è qualse'cosâ en qêt el citaxhiên averâtx solida pûstavirê? ■

Vëlarê dûciar

¿La democraçû pluralistâ, c'è riscadâ dîn la Repûlicâ? Aceastâ queziun pût-estarê sembla strôinschâ. ¿Non sînt-non dals ziuâs ut da endorçar 'n constituziun super-democrâtic, fraicadâ sûr las leçûns dal tûrônterîa qê noi toct tiennent sofriats anáintsch el Revoluziun? ¿Non tiennent-noi 'n culturâ partizân tgrivînd, cûn tres partis politicâis dêtxâ avertiçînds és pût-estarê pû vânds?

Qê noi sovenênçarhent përqêt el Regipâts *non* fût democrâtic. Eu perziunâlmînt fût atractadâ përd sieu promiçûns dal "democraçû pluralistâ gadalisâ". És përd certân, severâis partis tiennent cuntestats las eleziuns. Da c'horsicâ, si pût zirarê el mismeu ôvêr el vell Tzaratûtsch del Est, és mismâ oxhi dels pâtsilor squasi-fascistâns tál qê Zimbabwe és Singapurâ.

Quâis contraphartis hi füvent, sovînt non füvent contraphartis vrâtsilor da toct; os sostigñhovent el Regeu és sieu governamâintsch, és ordvârt füvent

PSD declares "popular front"

The first legislative election campaign in the Republic is kicking off with a Social Democrat (PSD) call for a "Popular Front" list of candidates.

Under the new draft electoral legislation, each party which wishes to run for Chamber of Deputies seats must nominate a list of candidates upfront - rather than assigning seats after the election, as was the tradition in the Kingdom.

The PSD have nominated party secretary Miestrâ Schivâ as their candidate for *Seneschâl* (Prime Minister). Schivâ has issued a call for all those who support her candidacy, and the basic manifesto reproduced to the right, to stand for the Chamber of Deputies as part of a "Popular Front" list.

"I know that many Talossans are edgy about getting involved in party politics," said Schivâ, "perhaps mainly because of the unpleasant history of abuse and personality destruction that goes with Talossan politics. But the *Frînt Populâr* is a new and exciting way for ordinary Talossans to get involved in politics.

A fortnight away from a Constitution

As *Qator Itrîns* went to press, the whole nation of Talossa were voting in a referendum to ratify the new permanent Constitution of the Republic.

After nine months of fractious and dilatory debate, the Draft Constitution was finally approved by the five-member Constitutional Committee on March 13th of this month. Speaking for the committee, its chair Miestrâ Schivâ thanked "all Talossans who participated in this long, strange trip. When I took my seat on the Committee, nine months ago, I had no idea it would take so long to get here. But here we are. And I truly think this is the kind of constitution we can all be proud of."

The shape of the document kept twisting and turning right up until the last possible minute. Just before final ratification, a vote was passed to abolish the *Senäts* (the upper house of Parliament, restricted to experienced citizens and representing the provinces). Then, a week later, another vote decided to restore the

"There's no party discipline or meetings - support me for Prime Minister and support the basic manifesto, and apart from that you can do what you like once elected."

The first two places on the list will be taken by Schivâ and her party-mate Martî-Páir Furxhéir. Schivâ says that she wants "at least three more candidates, although probably not all of them will be elected".

Also up and running is the Peculiarist MRP party, whose manifesto is also reprinted in this issue. D. N. Vercáriâ's party looks like winning at least one and possibly two seats, and is currently the best organised party outside the Popular Front. The Guelph Party of National Security Advisor and presidential candidate Michael Pope, meanwhile, has been slow to gather support apart from that of its widely respected leader.

Join the Popular Front: email
heatherblackrose@paradise.net.nz



Senäts - but only once the Republic has reached a population threshold of 35-40 citizens.

Schivâ admits to deliberately provoking some of the more controversial debates - "but not out of boredom. I felt that my job was to make sure that the Constitution was discussed as deeply and fundamentally as possible - so that no one had any right to grumble about anything later. So, if I did hear someone grumbling during the constitutional process, I would try to write their grumble up as an amendment to get a formal discussion and vote on it.

"That was the way the legislature worked in Penguinia, and how I hope that our new Chamber of Deputies

Popular Front Draft Manifesto

All Popular Front candidates pledge to support a government which will:

- establish friendly relationships with large, stable and serious micronations;
- make talossa.net the best, brightest and most welcoming webportal possible for the Republic;
- commission an Official Report into incorporating the Republic as a non-profit corporation, as the first step to being legally able to own our own web-presence and intellectual property.

All Popular Front candidates pledge support for the following legislation in the first Chamber of Deputies:

- an Immigration Act which will establish a secret-ballot referendum vote for all new citizens
- a Justice Act which will establish a "Circuit" (lower) Court. This Court will examine all cases except constitutional ones in the first instance so that the High Court becomes a court of appeal
- a National Webspace act which will vest responsibility for the content of Wittenberg and the official Republic websites in the Secretary of State;
- a Language Act to establish a Republican CÚG. This will make "teach yourself" material for the Talossan language more available, and work closely with all Talossan-speakers everywhere.

[lower house of Parliament] will work. I think the approach worked well - the "bicameral with delay" provisions form the perfect compromise between all shades of opinion."

"This is a basic law which we all helped create and about which we should all be fanatically proud," Schivâ adds. "I am half-considering proposing a law to the new *Parlamînt* requiring all Talossans to have a printed copy of the Constitution handy at all times."

With the Republic boasting twenty citizens after Ugo Truffelli's acceptance, the new constitution will need at least eleven "yes" votes to be ratified. The election ends April 14th. ■

LINK

The Final Draft Constitution:

<http://homepages.paradise.net.nz/daphlawl/talossa/constitution.pdf>

New constitution, new Talossa

The Republic of Talossa is on the verge of adopting its new constitution, replacing the temporary provisional constitution.

Such an act is always of historic importance, but in this particular case it is a definitive break from the history of the former Kingdom of Talossa.

If the citizens of a nation are its life, its constitution is its soul. Its moral compass. Its almost religious guidance. Drafting a constitution is preparing the future for better or for worse.

The constitution of the former Kingdom of Talossa had, if I may be blunt, a single objective: keeping Ben Madison in power. Layered through its text are loopholes or restrictions enabling a few individuals to keep a tight control of the nationette, provided they had the backing of the Monarch and his all powerful veto on their side.

We, of course, by simply transitioning from a Monarchy to a Republic changed that aspect by providing an elected President with severe restrictions and the lack of a veto. We also restricted to two consecutive mandates the tenure of a person as president, ensuring a transition every two years.

Just the method of selecting the Prime Minister always gave me the creeps. If a single party failed to obtain the majority, the King alone was able to elect a new one, based solely on HIS perception of which candidate could best succeed a vote of confidence. He used this power several years ago when he announced he would never appoint a TLP prime-minister, unless they alone obtained a majority - even if all of the Cosâ members backed the nomination.

In the Republic, we made sure this position is elected by the Chamber of Deputies, without any intrigues on the part of our President.

The vote of confidence is abolished, replaced by the ability for the chamber of deputies to replace him or her by a simple majority vote. At a first glance, we might think it is similar to a vote of confidence, but because such a motion requires to name a replacement, the randomness of a new election doesn't come into play. Also, if two parties decide to bring the prime-minister down, they need to negotiate who the replacement shall be.

But the Seneschâl isn't the only



MARTI-PÁIR FURXHÉIR shares his ideas on how to keep discussion flourishing in the Republic's online forums.

major change in the roles of officers of the Republic. The Corut Justices, Head of State and the Secretary of State may no longer sit in the government, ensuring that these will not be caught in a conflict of interest.

The role of the Secretary of State has also been severely restricted. Instead of being in charge of the whole legislative procedure, our Secretary of State is now mostly a director of Elections, with the management of the actual legislative process left into the hands of the elected president of each chamber (the Túisach'h and Mençéi), decentralizing even more the powers of the once all-encompassing office.

The Director of Elections office will also be radically modified. Now, electoral regulations will be determined by law rather than by declaration of the Secretary of State. Elections will also occur at fixed dates, providing more stability for the most important actions of the population.

But even more importantly, from now on, every single decision performed by the whole population, whether it is an election or a referendum, will be performed via secret ballots.

These ballots will allow every citizen to cast their vote according to their

own conscience and values, rather than out of fear of offending the head of state and falling from the good graces of the founder of the nation.

Now, parties in the Chamber of Deputies election will also be required to submit *in advance*, their list of candidate deputies in order of preference. This will both allow for a clearer more predictable electoral outcome, but also for the creation of coalition lists rather than long term coalition parties.

The PC party of the former Kingdom should possibly never have existed. It contained members with opposite point of views who were both muted by the influence of the King. The Party had become the instrument of domination by the monarch, but because of the close ties established between the members, it was a party hard to divide, until the GCP and the MN left the party direction-less.

It quickly reorganized itself along a new party line, but it was clear that the party no longer had the life it once had. Ben Madison accused the PC of wanting to dominate the Nation's politics when ironically, he had always been the only PC member fighting to maintain the PC's majority. In fact, the PC became the only party not to offer it's own prime-minister candidate in the post-Ragsdale era!

Such huge coalition parties should never exist, but fortunately, our constitution provides for an easier and more stable method for helping a party obtain a majority : a coalition list.

Such lists exist in every proportional legislature: several distinct parties provide a single list of candidates during an election to unify the force of their voters. Such alliances, unlike pie-pot blobs like the PC, do not share a single membership base, but rather a diversified list of allies that may easily shift between each elections, preventing the creation of a massive party dominating the nationette over almost a decade.

But there is an even more important, possibly unnoticed aspect of our new constitution. In the former Kingdom of Talossa, the declaration of rights comes near the end of the constitution, almost unnoticed after the various rights and obligations of the government. In the Republic, the Declaration of Freedoms and Protections is in the Points of State near the beginning of the document, proving where our priorities are. ■

manifesto of the movement for republican peculiarism

What is Peculiarism?

Briefly put, it's nothing that should scare you away. Actually it's the Talossan way of life already: the pretense of being a nation located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, that seceded from the USA approximately 25 years ago. Maintaining a federation with a representative parliamentary system, while we're 20 people - without these peculiar assumptions we were just a group of friends who could easily govern themselves by means of direct democracy.

Peculiarists recognise the reality that surrounds the Talossan dream. Even more so, Peculiarists know that some fundamentals of the Republic of Talossa are fictitious. While from these fundamentals the reality of worldwide friendships emerges, friendships amongst people who are deeply rooted in the reality of their real lives.

Peculiarists say that getting involved in the cabals of the Republic of Talossa is not an escape from reality. By playing the slightly odd game of being Talossans, Talossans will create the distinctive culture of an international group of friends, a culture that may radiate into our real lives abroad. A distinctive culture that is based on the commonly shared ideals of democracy.

So what is it with democracy? Why not a Kingdom?

History, and last not but least, especially the long history of the nationette of Talossa, has taught us that democracy is the only way to maintain an atmosphere of dignity. Only if every, that is, truly every citizen of Talossa has exactly the same rights before the laws of Talossa, only then we shall

be able to develop a culture of freedom of thought and speech.

We, the Peculiarists, want to go further in this than the proposed constitution allows. Equal eligibility for all Talossans above the dandelion age is our rallying cry. Let there be no aristocracy, no meritocracy; let the people decide whom they want to represent them, nationally or internationally. Any Talossan should be a Talossan amongst Talossans, equal before the law, no matter when we joined the Republic of Talossa.

Peculiarists say: Let's be the most democratic nationette amongst all the nationettes, worldwide.

What is the Peculiarist stand on internationalism?

We want a multilingual, multicultural Talossa that attracts people from all over the world.

Intermicronationally, we think that Talossa should talk to all nationbuilding people who are interested in talking to us Talossans. That means open boards where people from Talossa and elsewhere can congregate. We're not afraid of the young ones who like to copy our great nationette. It is a honour to be a role model of so many people. We do not want to bark at "bugs".

We don't recommend a politic of mutual diplomatic recognition. If people are living their dreams, would it change anything if we don't recognize their dreams? Or would we vanish from the face of the Earth, if we are not recognized? Those who exist, exist.

Instead of official diplomacy, we recommend project-based intermicronational cooperation, like in intermicro newspapers, virtual galleries, and stuff like that, or charitable / political



MRP founder D. Nanöc'hfigheu Vercáriâ

declarations, or whatever comes in handy.

So what do you want to do for real?

We are for a democratisation of the Talossan fora - by "tax"-funding our boards, for example.

We shall struggle against "meritocracy" in the constitution - equal eligibility for all Talossans is our goal.

We want glasnost in immigration laws, and a clear separation of powers - keep the Courts out of this.

Will you cooperate with other political parties?

Of course. We hope that all political groups of Talossa will be represented in the Parliament. We think that all believers in democracy should be able to cooperate. Depending on the results of the coming elections, we can imagine a lot of political settings, from a M.R.P. government through various coalitions through tolerating a minority government through varying majorities to opposition.

The M.R.P. will do what the electors expect us to do.

signed,
Bill Cooper
Andrew Lowry
D. N. Vercáriâ

The history men

Qator Itrins editor Miestrâ Schivâ interviewed Chris Gruber (CCG) and Jonathan Kelley (JKK), the founders of Dîn Sieu Propreux Mocts, the Talossan History Project (<http://www.courteousminer.com/psd/index.php?cat=7>)

MS: Tell the readers of Qator Itrins why you two decided to start the Talossan History Project.

JKK: I think it was your idea first, Chris, so why don't you start.

CCG: Was it mine?

JKK: I think so.

CCG: Well... I seem to recall that we were online, discussing what we could do to attract more prospectives. And we had, about the same time, mentioned that [Martî-Páir Furxhéir]'s marketing ideas were not what would work best.

MS: What marketing ideas would those be?

CCG: He's been pushing this idea of Google advertising, mostly. By weighing the Google searches in our favour, he reasons, we'll attract more people. But my question has always been the same: Who the hell cares? He says that someone might put "micronation" in the search and come up with us. And I say, who's to say that will attract prospectives?

MS: Attracting people to the Republic is one thing. Keeping them around once they've had a quick look is another.

CCG: Exactly. What attracted us? It wasn't advertising; it was the culture, the people... those are the things that make us want to participate in the first place.

JKK: There was another factor. You, Miestra, and you, Chrischtovhal, had both ragged on me for not being more involved in public affairs. And I saw that this was a chance to do something I would enjoy and perhaps do okay at.

CCG: Right.

MS: Perhaps you might like to tell

our readers, just briefly, JKK, why it is that you've chosen to stay out of electoral politics.

CCG: Yes, do tell!

JKK: I don't feel it's my forté for a wide variety of different reasons. I may change my mind in the future. But the bottom line is that I come to Talossa for fun. When politics looks like fun to me, I'll be more involved.

CCG: Bah! Excuses!

JKK: I feel like we're Bob and Doug McKenzie, eh.

CCG: Take off, ya hoser.

MS: JKK has a point. Talossa can be intimidating if it just looks like a "political simulation". We need Talossans who're keen to build the Republic in its other aspects.

CCG: Which is why we were talking about a better approach to attracting people to the Republic.

JKK: Yes, that was the core of our discussion. I bitched that we weren't doing enough. You sensibly asked if I had any actual ideas to offer. I liked one of yours.

MS: Anyway, if I can get some comment from you, Chris, on the subject of whether you think that the Talossan tradition, up until this point, has been a bit too "politics heavy". By politics I mean internal Talossan politics, elections, parties and laws, rather than discussions of macronational politics - which I think we all know can easily get overdone.

CCG: I felt that what we should do is have some sort of project where prospectives can see that it's not a Kingdom-style monoculture run by a cultural dictator. Talossa is poltiics-heavy, to be sure, and may always be. But it's so much



Christopher C. Gruber

more. And we hope that we can make sure the Republic doesn't seem to be politics-ONLY, as it were.

MS: So, you have a bunch of interviews being temporarily stored in the Vöce del Popúl blog. How far does this project go? Are you planning to continue to interview every Talossan? Are there any plans to turn this into a permanent publication of any kind?

CCG: No real plans for a publication, but that's because of him, not me. I suggested making this into a book, and I still may try to pressure him into it.

JKK: Ultimately I'd like to see it relocated to the Republic's website. I plan to interview a wide variety of folks, including those former citizens and Kingdom citizens who would like to tell their stories. We cannot possibly record history in a complete manner unless we get many perspectives.

CCG: I'd like to set it up in two forms: One, as a web-log style, like it has now, on Talossa dot com (TDC), and one, as a book, so in case one owuld like to download it, print it out, and read it on a tram. Perhaps we'd even work on it being an ongoing project, adding voices to teh mix. More interviews covering more subjects. So far, most of these

travischtâ

stick to the Revolution.

MS: Have either of you learnt anything that's surprised you in the interviews so far, or caused you to re-evaluate what you thought you knew about Talossan history?

JKK: I haven't gotten too many new historical tidbits, but I have seen a much broader side of the persons I've interviewed. Their own views of Talossan history have certainly impacted my own.

CCG: I've been surprised mostly that this series is so damned good. It's richer and more addictive than I'd ever imagined.

MS: Of course, collecting primary source data is only one side of the historian's craft - analysing that data, finding trends and themes in it, is also important. How do you think this data could be used by future historians - either Talossans, or outsiders interested in the phenomenon of micronations, or in small-group politics or Internet communities in general?

CCG: I think it's mostly going to decimate the original Ar Pats model. One man's view is no longer an acceptable way to record history. And I think we're going to see that this interview series is what that idea is all about. That's why we've decided to name it something proper; In Their Own Words.

JKK: Yes. Because it is dangerous to take too macro a view of history. For example, it's a common misconception that populations have babies. They don't. WOMEN have babies. The view of the person who was there, who will remember little details that he or she may think trivial, may be a gold mine for future students and enthusiasts. Our goal is to capture those recollections before they fade—and in their own words, as the title goes, not through a prism that filters out what it doesn't want to hear.

MS: History from below, in other words. As a Marxist I highly approve. (laughs)

CCG: The overall texture of our history isn't as simple as it seems.

MS: Which brings me on to a related question, concerning how the History project fits into wider Talossan culture. Certain commentators have warned



Jonathan K. Kelley

recently that the Republic risks becoming a one-party state “by default” - that one group of people seem to have the energy and enthusiasm to run things, and there isn't a real competition either for people to lead or ideologies to lead by. Do you think the Talossan conversation is in danger of becoming monophonic?

JKK: I do, to a degree. But the only remedy for that is to build interest on the broadest possible level. All Talossans seem to have one thing in common: they are readers. So let's give them something pertinent to read, to help them feel ownership in their community.

CCG: I think that's oversimplifying a short-term condition. It points back to a remark I made in the interview that I held: open-source society. The Republic isn't a one-man creation; it's an open-source society, a society in which any and all interested parties can participate and help shape the Republic. That's why saying “one-party state by default” is so simplistic. It seems like that right now, but only because the loudest voices are making it seem so. More voices means more variation, and therefore, a richer culture.

MS: I would also say that one of the limits of the open-source approach is that you can't change the past - at least, unless you're a Stalin-style dictator. In other words, our only constraint is Talossan history, although we can transcend that even if we can't delete it.

interview

CCG: Exactly. Do the mature thing: accept your past and deal with it.

JKK: This is a key rule of the Project. We will redact no one's words. If embarrassing facts come out, let them stand in the light. The only editing that happens on anyone's words are spelling and syntax checks, never altering substance. In my view it is a great sin to make an assault on history by falsifying it. What we get at a given time is one person's views, and recollections. They can err—but they will be reported as they said it.

CCG: I agree for the most part. A mild correction of factual information could be done in a tactful manner, after the interview. For example, if one were to say “All through June, such-and-such occurred,” when it's evident that such-and-such occurred in December.

MS: Our History defines us. It is the substance of our community. If we try to deny our history, to go all “year Zero” like we did in Penguinia, we will drift aimlessly. If one man defines what our history is, we will simply be the creation of one man. History must be objective, and therefore polyphonic.

CCG: Nice. (grins)

MS: Anyway, June 1 2005 will be our first Independence Day. Would you both like to give us your slightly drunken visions of how the Republic should look by 1 June 2006 - two years of Our Freedom Restored, as the Penguinians used to say?

JKK: I'm only two sips into my second beer. But with that said, I think the way it should look is a thriving multiparty democracy. We should be taking on the issues that affect our future. And if we have the sense the gods gave a goose, we'll do so civilly without blowing our stacks.

CCG: We're not perfect, and we've never claimed to be, but we're well on our way to something very, very special. By 2006, we'll be in full swing, I'd bet. We'll have done that very thing we set out to do: create and nurture a free, open society sans Madison.

MS: What do you think the biggest problem we face on our way there is?

continued on next page

The history men (continued)

CCG: Self-destructive behaviour. If we become too much of a Ben-hater's society or become too much of an infighting entity, then we'll doom ourselves. But all evidence points to the contrary. And, for that, I am supremely grateful.

JKK: I think we face an ongoing challenge: to define ourselves as ourselves, rather than as Non-Ben. Our political process should be a fine step in that direction. I hope the Project will be another. Many of us still have friends and cordial contacts in the Kingdom, and they watch us carefully. Our doors need to remain open, our welcome warm, just in case any of them ever prefer our vision. Our task is to build that vision into something people would want to join in.

CCG: Build a firm foundation and everything else is gravy.

MS: *One last, slightly egotistical question: what role do you see this newsmagazine, QI, playing in the future of the Republic?*

JKK: An essential one. The Project has no desire to supplant *QI*, but rather to supplement it. We can work together. The more Talossan media we have, the better for all. *QI* provides Talossan-language material, of which there is no great surplus. It speaks to past and present. I hope it will continue to attract quality content.

CCG: *QI* is a centrepiece, to be sure. Our project and *QI* have similar aims, but *QI* is more about current events and reflection on them, whereas the Project is more about looking at our history from various subjective viewpoints and compiling them to create a complete picture. *QI* keeps us excited about today. *QI* is fantastic for that sort of thing. (laughs)

JKK: It's also worth pointing out that Marti-Páir's regular updates also play a valuable role. I fervently hope he keeps it up. I look forward to both publications.

CCG: As do I. More!

JKK: That's not all the Talossan media that's on the horizon, either. I worked with Gödafríeu on the editing

of his history of the origins of the Republic. In doing that, I helped discharge a duty, but I also felt like a participant in historical preservation. That process may have helped incline me down the path Chris and I have devised. I'm really looking forward to the release.

CCG: Which reminds me, I have to get cracking on more of *Dare Something Worthy!* ■

one bear's view...

by D. Nanöc'hfiglheu Vercáriâ



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